
OF THE
CHARACTERS of WOMEN:

AN
EPISTLE to a LADY,

By Mr. POPE.

(Price One Shilling.)

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By Mr. P O P E. K



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Printed by J. Wright, for LAWTON GILLIVER
at *Homer's Head* against St. *Dunstan's* Church in
Fleetstreet, MDCCXXXV.

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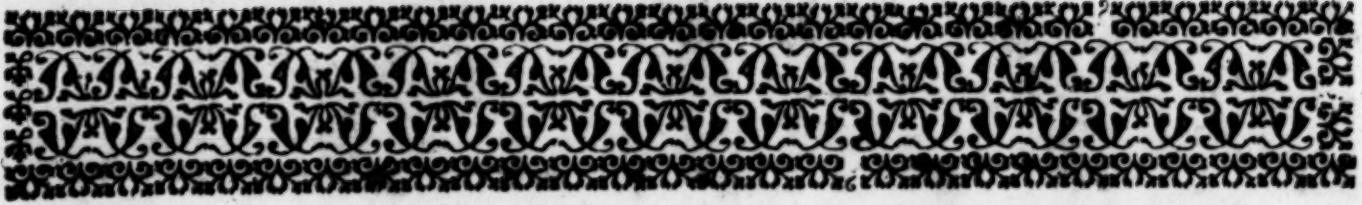
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author being very sensible how particular a Tendernefs is due to the FEMALE SEX, and at the same time how little they generally show to each other; declares, upon his Honour, that no one Character is drawn from the Life, in this Epistle. It would otherwise be most improperly inscribed to a Lady, who, of all the Women he knows, is the last that would be entertain'd at the Expence of Another.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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to each other; he has upon his own part, that no one

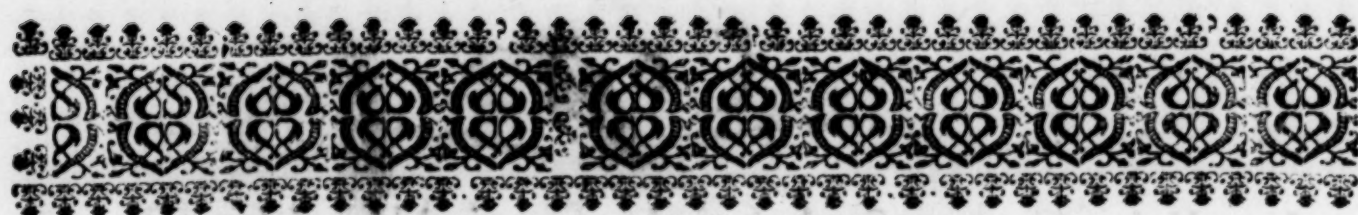
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then could be entertained in the language of

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OF THE
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To a LADY.



NOTHING so true as what you once let fall,
Most Women have no Characters at all.
Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,
And best distinguish'd by black, brown, or fair.

How many Pictures of one Nymph we view,
All how unlike each other, all how true!

B

Arcadia's

Arcadia's Countess, here, in ermin'd pride,
 There, *Pastorella* by a Fountain side :
 Here *Fannia* leering on her own good man,
 And there a naked *Leda* with a Swan.
 Let then the Fair-one beautifully cry
 In *Magdalen's* loose hair and lifted eye,
 Or drest in smiles of sweet *Cecilia* shine,
 With simp'ring Angels, Palms, and Harps divine ;
 Whether the Charmer sinner it, or saint it,
 When Folly grows romantic, we must paint it.

Come then, the Colours and the ground prepare !
 Dip in the Rainbow, trick her off in Air,
 Chuse a firm Cloud before it falls, and in it
 Catch, e're she change, the *Cynthia* of this minute.

Rufa, whose eye quick-glancing o'er the *Park*,
 Attracts each light gay Meteor of a Spark,
 Agrees as ill with *Rufa* studying *Locke*,
 As *Flavia's* diamonds with her dirty smock,

Or

Or *Flavia*'s self in glue (her rising task)
 And issuing flagrant to an evening Mask:
 So morning Infects that in Muck begun,
 Shine, buzz, and fly-blow, in the setting-fur.

How soft is *Silia*! fearful to offend,
 The frail one's Advocate, and weak one's Friend;
 To her, *Calista* prov'd her Conduct nice,
 And good *Simplicius* asks of her Advice.
 Sudden, she storms! she raves! You tip the wink,
 But spare your censure; *Silia* does not drink.
 All eyes may see from what the change arose,
 All eyes may see — a Pimple on her nose.

Papillia, wedded to her am'rous Spark,
 Sighs for the Shades — "How charming is a *Park*!
 A *Park* is purchas'd, but the Fair he sees
 All bath'd in tears — "Oh odious, odious *Trees*!

Ladies

Ladies like variegated Tulips show,
 'Tis to their Changes half their Charms we owe;
 Such happy Spots the nice Admirer take,
 Fine by defect, and delicately weak.
 'Twas thus *Calypso* once our hearts alarm'd,
 Aw'd without Virtue, without Beauty charm'd;
 Her Tongue bewitch'd as odly as her Eyes,
 Less Wit than Mimic, more a Wit than wife:
 Strange Graces still, and stranger Flights she had,
 Was just not ugly, and was just not mad;
 Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
 As when she touch'd the brink of all we hate.

Narcissa's nature, tolerably mild,
 To make a Wash would hardly stew a Child;
 Has ev'n been prov'd to grant a Lover's pray'r,
 And paid a Tradesman once to make him stare;
 Gave alms at *Easter*, in a christian trim,
 And made a Widow happy, for a whim.

Why

Why then declare Good-nature is her scorn,
 When 'tis by that alone she can be born?
 Why pique all mortals, yet affect a name?
 A Fool to Pleasure, yet a Slave to Fame!
 Now deep in *Taylor* and the Book of *Martyrs*,
 Now drinking Citron with his Grace and *Ch***:
 Now Conscience chills her, and now Passion burns,
 And Atheism and Religion take their turns;
 A very Heathen in the carnal part,
 Yet still a sad, good Christian at her heart.

Flavia's a Wit, has too much sense to pray,
 To toast our wants and wishes, is her way;
 Nor asks of God but of her Stars to give
 The mighty blessing, "while we live, to live."
 Then all for Death, that Opiate of the Soul!
Lucretia's Dagger, *Rosamonda's* Bowl.
 Say, what can cause such impotence of mind?
 A Spark too fickle, or a Spouse too kind.

C

Wife

Wise Wretch ! of Pleasures too refin'd to please,
 With too much Spirit to be e'er at Ease,
 With too much Quickness ever to be taught,
 With too much Thinking to have common Thought:
 You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give,
 And die of nothing but a Rage to live.

Turn then from Wits ; and look on *Simo's* Mate,
 No Afs so meek, no Afs so obstinate:
 Or her, that owns her Faults, but never mends,
 Because she's honest, and the best of Friends:
 Or her, whose Life the Church and Scandal share,
 For ever in a Passion, or a Pray'r:
 Or who in sweet Vicissitude appears
 Of Mirth and Opium, Ratafie and Tears,
 The daily Anodyne, and nightly Draught,
 To kill those Foes to Fair ones, Time and Thought.
 Woman and Fool are *two* hard Things to hit,
 For true No-meaning puzzles more than Wit.

Pictures like these, (dear Madam) to design
 Asks no firm hand, and no unerring line,
 Some wandring Touches, some reflected Light,
 Some flying Stroke, alone can hit them right:
 For how should equal Colours do the knack,
Camelions who can paint in White and Black?

IN publick Stations Men sometimes are shown,
 A Woman's seen in Private life alone:
 Our bolder Talents in full view display'd,
 Your Virtues open fairest in the Shade.
 Bred to disguise, in Publick 'tis you hide;
 Where none distinguish 'twixt your *Shame* and *Pride*,
Weakness or *Delicacy*; all so nice,
 Each is a sort of *Virtue*, and of *Vice*.

In sev'ral Men we sev'ral Passions find,
 In Women, two almost divide the Kind,
 Those only fix'd, they first or last obey;
 The Love of Pleasures, and the Love of Sway.

That,

That, Nature gives; and where the Lesson taught
Is but to please, can Pleasure seem a fault?
Experience, This; by Man's Oppression curst,
They seek the second not to lose the first.

Men, some to Business, some to Pleasure take,
But every Woman is, at heart, a Rake:
Men, some to Quiet, some to publick Strife,
But every Lady would be Queen for life.

Yet mark the fate of a whole Sex of Queens!
Pow'r all their end, but Beauty all the means.
In Youth they conquer with so wild a rage,
As leaves them scarce a Subject in their Age:
For foreign Glory, foreign Joy, they roam;
No thought of Peace or Happiness at home.
But Wisdom's Triumph is well-tim'd Retreat,
As hard a Science to the Fair as Great!
Beauties like Tyrants, old and friendless grown,
Yet hate Repose, and dread to be Alone,

Worn

Worn out in publick, weary ev'ry eye,
Nor leave one sigh behind them when they die.

Pleasures the Sex, as Children birds, pursue,
Still out of reach, yet never out of view,
Sure, if they catch, to spoil the Toy at most,
To covet flying, and regret when lost:
At last, to Follies Youth could scarce defend
It grows their Age's prudence to pretend;
Asham'd to own they gave delight before,
Reduc'd to feign it, when they give no more.
As Hags hold *Sabbaths*, less for joy than spight,
So these their merry, miserable Night;
Still round and round the Ghosts of Beauty glide,
And haunt the Places where their Honour dy'd.

See how the World its Veterans rewards!
A Youth of Frolicks, an old Age of Cards,
Fair to no purpose, artful to no end,
Young without Lovers, old without a Friend,

A Fop their Passion, but their Prize a Sot,
 Alive, ridiculous, and dead, forgot!

Ah Friend! to dazzle let the Vain design,
 To raise the Thought and touch the Heart, be thine!
 That Charm shall grow, while what fatigues the Ring
 Flaunts and goes down, an unregarded thing.
 So when the Sun's broad beam has tir'd the sight,
 All mild ascends the Moon's more sober light,
 Serene in Virgin Modesty she shines,
 And unobserv'd the glaring Orb declines.

Oh blest with *Temper*! whose unclouded ray
 Can make to morrow chearful as to day;
 That pleas'd can see a younger charm, or hear
 Sighs for a Sister with unwounded ear;
 That ne'er shall answer till a Husband cool,
 Or, if you rule him, never show you rule;
 Please by receiving, by submitting sway,
 Yet have your humour most, when you obey;

Let

Let Fops or Fortune fly which way they will;
 Despise all loss of Tickets or Codille;
 Spleen, Vapors, or Small-pox, above them all,
 And Mistrefs of yourself, tho' China fall.

And yet believe me, good as well as ill,
 Woman's at best a Contradiction still.
 Heav'n, when it strives to polish all it can
 Its last, best work, but forms a *softer Man*;
 Picks from each Sex, to make the Fav'rite blest,
 Your love of Pleasure, our desire of Rest,
 Blends, in exception to all gen'ral rules,
 Your Taste of Follies, with our Scorn of Fools,
 Reserve with Frankness, Art with Truth ally'd,
 Courage with Softness, Modesty with Pride,
 Fix'd Principles, with Fancy ever new;
 Shakes all together, and produces — *You*.

Ev'n such is Woman's Fame: With this un-blest,
 Toasts live a scorn, and Queens may die a jest.

This

This *Phæbus* promis'd, I forget the Year,
 When those blue eyes first open'd on the Sphere;
 Ascendant *Phæbus* watch'd that hour with care,
 Averted half your Parents simple Pray'r,
 And gave you *Beauty*, but deny'd the *Pelf*
 That buys your Sex a Tyrant o'er itself:
 That gen'rous God, who Wit and Gold refines,
 And ripens Spirits as he ripens Mines,
 Kept Dross for Duchesses, the world shall know it,
 To you gave Sense, Good-humour, and a Poet.



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